



Conservation Land
Trust for Public Land
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The Trust for Public Land is a national conservation organization that works with communities to protect the land and water that keeps us healthy, inspired, and connected with nature and each other. In the 29 years that we've been working in Connecticut, we've protected over 6,200 acres in more than 40 communities across the state, in partnership with the DEEP, the federal government, municipalities, land trusts and private landowners.

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Testimony in Support of Governor's Bill 947

AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER PURPOSES.

by Alicia Sullivan
Connecticut State Director, The Trust for Public Land

Esteemed Chairs and Members of the Committee on Finance Revenue and Bonding:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Governor's Bill S. B. 947. This bill provides essential funding for Connecticut's programs that support the conservation of open space, parks, water resources and trails throughout the state, enhancing the quality of life in all of our communities, urban and rural.

Investments in open space protection, trail and park creation and natural resource conservation attract people to live in Connecticut and enhance our quality of life. They also contribute to our economy through support of the outdoor recreation industry, and protection of working farms.

Funds for the **Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program of \$10,000,000 in Section 2 (j)(3)** and for the **Open Space Grant Program of \$10,000,000** for grants to land trusts, municipalities and water companies in **Section 13 (d) (3)** are critical to the state as we continue to strive to protect 21% of the state's land by 2023. What is even more urgent is that when priority land is not protected, it can often be lost forever.

These two programs use State funds effectively to fund carefully selected high priority projects statewide and in our local communities, from large landscapes, like The Preserve in Old Saybrook, to community gardens in cities. Both programs also leverage the state's funds with federal, local, and private funding.

In addition, (Section 13.(d)(1) and (2)) we fully support the **Long Island Sound Stewardship and Resiliency Program and Municipal Green Infrastructure grants Programs**. Our waterways and coastal resources are among the most precious and important natural resources of our state. Funding these programs will enhance the health of Long Island Sound by protecting coastal buffer areas, addressing wastewater treatment and reduce pollution by creating long term infrastructure to handle stormwater before it becomes a problem.

Lastly, we support the establishment of a **Recreational Trail/Greenway/Bikeway Program** and the allocation of **\$12 million** for grants, in **Section 66** of the Bill. Making connections in many types of trails will benefit us all. Trails, parks and greenways bring communities together, promote exercise and good health and when used for commuting, they prevent pollution as well.

The Trust for Public Land strongly supports the above mentioned sections of Governor's Bill 947. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify before the Committee.